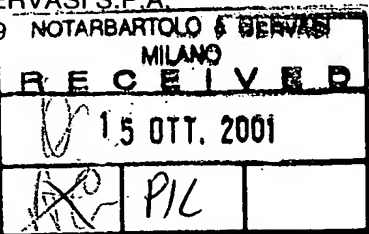


PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

From the
INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINING AUTHORITY

To: GERVASI, Gemma NOTARBARTOLO & GERVASI S.P.A. Corso di Porta Vittoria, 9 20122 Milano ITALIE	
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NOTIFICATION OF TRANSMITTAL OF
THE INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT
(PCT Rule 71.1)

Applicant's or agent's file reference 1951PTWO	IMPORTANT NOTIFICATION	
International application No. PCT/EP00/07110	International filing date (day/month/year) 25/07/2000	Priority date (day/month/year) 26/07/1999
Applicant MEZZOLI, Giorgio		


1. The applicant is hereby notified that this International Preliminary Examining Authority transmits herewith the international preliminary examination report and its annexes, if any, established on the international application.
2. A copy of the report and its annexes, if any, is being transmitted to the International Bureau for communication to all the elected Offices.
3. Where required by any of the elected Offices, the International Bureau will prepare an English translation of the report (but not of any annexes) and will transmit such translation to those Offices.

4. REMINDER

The applicant must enter the national phase before each elected Office by performing certain acts (filing translations and paying national fees) within 30 months from the priority date (or later in some Offices) (Article 39(1)) (see also the reminder sent by the International Bureau with Form PCT/IB/301).

Where a translation of the international application must be furnished to an elected Office, that translation must contain a translation of any annexes to the international preliminary examination report. It is the applicant's responsibility to prepare and furnish such translation directly to each elected Office concerned.

For further details on the applicable time limits and requirements of the elected Offices, see Volume II of the PCT Applicant's Guide.

Name and mailing address of the IPEA/  European Patent Office - Gitschiner Str. 103 D-10958 Berlin Tel. +49 30 25901 - 0 Fax: +49 30 25901 - 840	Authorized officer Geier, A Tel. +49 30 25901-706
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TENT COOPERATION TREATY

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INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

Applicant's or agent's file reference 1951PTWO	FOR FURTHER ACTION See Notification of Transmittal of International Preliminary Examination Report (Form PCT/IPEA/416)	
International application No. PCT/EP00/07110	International filing date (day/month/year) 25/07/2000	Priority date (day/month/year) 26/07/1999
International Patent Classification (IPC) or national classification and IPC A61M3/02		
Applicant MEZZOLI, Giorgio		

1. This international preliminary examination report has been prepared by this International Preliminary Examining Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.



2. This REPORT consists of a total of 4 sheets, including this cover sheet.

☒ This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, i.e. sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis for this report and/or sheets containing rectifications made before this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions under the PCT).

These annexes consist of a total of 5 sheets.

3. This report contains indications relating to the following items:

- I ☒ Basis of the report
- II ☐ Priority
- III ☐ Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
- IV ☐ Lack of unity of invention
- V ☒ Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
- VI ☐ Certain documents cited
- VII ☐ Certain defects in the international application
- VIII ☐ Certain observations on the international application

Date of submission of the demand 15/02/2001	Date of completion of this report 12.10.2001
Name and mailing address of the international preliminary examining authority:  European Patent Office - Gitschiner Str. 103 D-10958 Berlin Tel. +49 30 25901 - 0 Fax: +49 30 25901 - 840	Authorized officer Korth, C-F Telephone No. +49 30 25901 633 

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

International application No. PCT/EP00/07110

I. Basis of the report

1. With regard to the elements of the international application (*Replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report since they do not contain amendments (Rules 70.16 and 70.17)*):

Description, pages:

1,2,4-15	as originally filed			
3,3a	as received on	11/06/2001	with letter of	06/06/2001

Claims, No.:

18-20	as originally filed			
1-17	as received on	11/06/2001	with letter of	06/06/2001

Drawings, sheets:

1/6-6/6	as originally filed
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2. With regard to the language, all the elements marked above were available or furnished to this Authority in the language in which the international application was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

These elements were available or furnished to this Authority in the following language: , which is:

- ☐ the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of the international search (under Rule 23.1(b)).
- ☐ the language of publication of the international application (under Rule 48.3(b)).
- ☐ the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international preliminary examination (under Rule 55.2 and/or 55.3).

3. With regard to any nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence disclosed in the international application, the international preliminary examination was carried out on the basis of the sequence listing:

- ☐ contained in the international application in written form.
- ☐ filed together with the international application in computer readable form.
- ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form.
- ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form.
- ☐ The statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed has been furnished.
- ☐ The statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence listing has been furnished.

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

International application No. PCT/EP00/07110

4. The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:

- ☒ the description, pages: 3
- ☒ the claims, Nos.: 18-20
- ☐ the drawings, sheets:

5. ☐ This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed (Rule 70.2(c)):

(Any replacement sheet containing such amendments must be referred to under item 1 and annexed to this report.)

6. Additional observations, if necessary:

V. Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Yes:	Claims	1-17
	No:	Claims	
Inventive step (IS)	Yes:	Claims	1-17
	No:	Claims	
Industrial applicability (IA)	Yes:	Claims	1-17
	No:	Claims	

2. Citations and explanations
see separate sheet

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT - SEPARATE SHEET**

International application No. PCT/EP00/07110

Remark concerning point V:

Claims 1-17 meet the criteria set out in PCT Article 33 (2)-(4), because the prior art (US4206756) does not teach or fairly suggest a device for washing the external auditory meatus whereby the inlet channel is separated from the discharge channel by a septum.

outflow of the liquid and of the products of washing and to suspend introduction of the washing liquid into the external auditory meatus as soon as there arises (or could arise) an anomalous situation that is (at least potentially) dangerous.

The aforesaid risk may arise also in the case of washing carried out by others if
5 the person performing the washing operation fails to detect in time (for any reason) a situation that is (at least potentially) dangerous and/or fails to react with due promptness.

With the purpose of avoiding the risk of an overpressure of the washing liquid, a device has been proposed having three lateral grooves as exit means (USP
10 4,206,756). But the design of said grooves is not such to exclude the possibility that all said grooves are obstructed by the solid products of washing.

This constitutes a serious drawback of known washing devices, which limits (or may limit) their use, in particular for self-washing of the external auditory meatus.

The washing device that forms the subject of the present invention comprises
15 means designed to prevent occurrence of the aforesaid overpressure, which render the device free from the serious drawbacks and risks of the known washing devices.

Summary of the invention

The subject of the present invention is a device for washing the external auditory
20 meatus, comprising an inlet channel for the washing liquid and a discharge channel which connects the end portion of the inlet channel with the outside environment, in which the discharge channel is designed to discharge the washing liquid outside if a further channel, designed to discharge the liquid and the products of washing outside, is at least partially obstructed by the products of

3a

washing.

The further channel may consist of the external auditory meatus, of an aural speculum in which the washing device is inserted, or of an outlet channel made in the body of the washing device.

AMENDED SHEET
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CLAIMS

- 1) A device for washing the external auditory meatus comprising at least one inlet channel (6) for the washing liquid (13), at least one discharge channel (8) which connects the end portion (7) of the at least one inlet channel (6) with the outside environment, said at least one discharge channel (8) being designed to discharge the washing liquid (13) outside if a further channel (9), designed to discharge the liquid (13) and the products of washing (14) outside, is at least partially obstructed by the products of washing (14), characterized in that the inlet channel (6) is separated from the discharge channel (8) by a septum (16), having a length shorter than that of the washing device (10), which delimits in addition the end portion (7) of the inlet channel (6).
- 2) A device according to Claim 1 inserted in an aural speculum, characterized in that said further channel (9) consists of the portion of the aural speculum not occupied by the washing device (10).
- 3) A device according to Claim 1, characterized in that it comprises an inlet channel (6) and a discharge channel (8).
- 4) A device according to Claim 1, characterized in that the section of the end portion (7) of the inlet channel (6) is greater than that of the initial portion of the inlet channel (6)
- 5) A device according to Claim 4, characterized in that the section of the end portion (7) of the inlet channel (6) is not smaller than the section of the initial portion of the inlet channel (6) increased by the section of the discharge channel (8).
- 6) A device according to Claim 3, characterized in that the section of the

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IPEA/EP

discharge channel (8) is not smaller than that of the initial portion of the inlet channel (6).

7) A device according to Claim 3, characterized in that the inlet channel (6) and the discharge channel (8) are set one of the other .

5 8) A device according to Claim 3, characterized in that the inlet channel (6) and the discharge channel (8) are set alongside one another.

9) A device according to Claim 3, characterized in that the inlet channel (6) and the discharge channel (8) are parallel to one another.

10 10) A device according to Claim 3, characterized in that the end portion of the discharge channel (8) engages laterally in the body of the washing device (10), from which it projects.

11) A device according to Claim 10, characterized in that the end portion of the discharge channel (8) that protrudes from the body of the washing device (10) constitutes the grip of the a device itself.

15 12) A device according to Claim 10, characterized in that the end portion of the discharge channel (8) projecting from the body of the washing device (10) is connected to means designed to dispose of the washing liquid (13) that flows out of the discharge channel (8).

20 13) A device according to Claim 1, characterized in that at the exit from the end portion (7) of the inlet channel (6) there are present means (17) designed to deflect towards the wall (4) of the external auditory meatus (2) the jet of liquid (13) coming out of the washing device (10).

14) A device according to Claim 13, characterized in that said means (17) are in addition designed to direct and/or widen and/or flatten the jet of liquid (13) coming

out of the washing device (10).

15) A device according to Claim 13, characterized in that the exit from the end portion (7) of the inlet channel (6) has an elliptical or flattened shape.

16) A device according to Claim 1, characterized in that it is used as means for
5 inspection of the external auditory meatus (2) and of the tympanic membrane (3) in a device for self-viewing of the external auditory meatus (2) and of the tympanic membrane (3).

17) A device according to Claim 1, characterized in that it is associated to means (18, 20, 21) designed to supply the washing liquid (13).